

This I believe: Patchwork Assessment

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I remember staring at it for a long time. “The road to success is not straight. There are curbs called Failure, red lights called Enemies and flat tires called Set-backs. But, if you have spare tires called Determination, an engine called Perseverance and insurance called Faith, you will make it to a place called Success!” No, I am not a bad driver, if that is what you are thinking. The words on the poster reminded me of the “bitter-sweet” experience I had and made me believe that in order to succeed, one must taste failure first.

Yes, it can be really frustrating when you fail in doing something. However, having a little patience and perseverance can really help to turn the situation around. I remember attending a facilitation workshop earlier this year and within 3 days, I experienced both failure and success!

We were told to facilitate a sharing session within our groups. As we were only acquaintances, I came up with a plan which I thought was foolproof—to play “blow-wind-blow” and get my group mates to interact with each other. However, it turned out that my plan was far from foolproof and everyone was still feeling awkward. I felt quite disappointed and horrified that things were turning out to be very different from how I expected it to be. Looking back, I can understand why they felt so restless. Imagine listening to someone who is half crazy late at night when all you feel like doing is sleeping... .. oh my, what was I thinking of?

However, “with my spare tire called Determination”, I decided to change the approach. I changed my mood and became serious. I gave them some time to think and write down all the bad names or adjectives that people have called them before and they have been affected by it in a negative way. After that, I got them to share the story behind the adjective or name which they were most badly affected by. I set the mood by starting, sharing my problems with people I hardly knew. It felt really great to say them out loud and soon, everyone started to share really personal stories and problems that broke their hearts. I realized that I was not the only one facing numerous problems in the “quite short yet seems quite long” 15 years of my life. The sharing was a very successful one and as I was the facilitator, I tasted the sweetness of success!

So why stop walking just because you see a curb? Why give up waiting for the green light just because you only see the red light? Why abandon the car just because you have a flat tire? Life is not perfect, and failing is perfectly normal. It was only when I decided to look on the bright side of things and stop being pessimistic then did I realize that there are solutions to everything. Remember, “if you want the rainbow, you must have the rain first”!